

Message Text

PAGE 01 TOKYO 05989 061033Z

53

ACTION AGR-08

INFO OCT-01 EA-06 ISO-00 EB-07 COME-00 STR-04 TRSE-00 L-02

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R 060855Z MAY 75

FM AMEMBASSY TOKYO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9934

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DEPT PASS AGRICULTURE FOR HUME AND FITZSIMMONDS

E.O. 1165: N/A

TAGS: EAGR ETRD JA

SUBJ: U.S. CITRUS: FUNGICIDES

REF: (A) TOKYO 5730; (B) TOKYO 5663

1. SUMMARY. AGATT REPS VISITED TWO KEY DIVISIONS IN MHW MAY 6. MHW INDICATION APPROVAL OPP AND TBZ CANNOT COME FOR AT LEAST SIX MONTHS. ACTION REQUESTED ON GATHERING DATA. AS OF MAY 1 MHW REPORTS 38 PERCENT OF LEMONS, 38 PERCENT OF ORANGES AND 0.7 PERCENT OF GRAPEFRUIT TESTED HAVE BEEN REJECTED FOR TOTAL OF 94,284 CARTONS FRUIT.

2. AGATT REPS VISITED BOTH MIURA, DIR FOOD SANITATION DIV (IN CHARGE OF INSPECTION AT PORTS) AND MIYAZAWA, DIR FOOD CHEMISTRY DIV (IN CHARGE OF APPROVAL OF NEW ADDITIVES) OF MHW THIS A.M. (MAY 6).

3. MIURA GOING BEFORE DIET REGULARLY ON THIS ISSUE NOW. SO FAR QUESTIONS ARE OF BACKGROUND NATURE ONLY. HE VERY ANXIOUS HAVE PROBLEM SOLVED ASAP, BUT AT A LOSS AS TO HOW EXACTLY TO GO ABOUT IT OTHER THAN WHAT HE IS NOW DOING UNDER CURRENT REGULATIONS. HE RECOGNIZED THAT FLORIDA GRAPEFRUIT IS TESTING NEGATIVE MORE THAN 98 PERCENT OF THE TIME SO THEY INTEND TO RELAX TESTING REQUIREMENTS ON FLORIDA GRAPEFRUIT - I.E., WILL SWITCH FROM TEST ON EACH BRAND IN EACH SHIP TO QUOTE PERIODIC LIMITED OFFICIAL USE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 02 TOKYO 05989 061033Z

RANDOM SAMPLE TESTING UNQUOTE. HE SAYS THEY HAVE OFFICIALLY CONDEMNED ONLY THOSE LOTS WHERE IMPORTER HAD WRITTEN INTO CONTRACT THAT DIPHENYL ONLY COULD BE USED AND AFTER DETECTING OPP OR TBZ THE IMPORTER REQUESTED MHW TO CONDEMN

FRUIT SO IMPORTER COULD MORE EASILY SHIFT TOTAL RESPONSIBILITY TO EXPORTING FIRM. OTHER FRUIT ON WHICH CHEMICALS FOUND BEING HELD IN BOND AWAITING FINAL MHW DECISION ON WHAT TO DO.

4. MIURA ALSO EXPLAINED THAT SURVEY OF IMPORTERS ALMOST COMPLETED IN WHICH THEY WERE ASKED WHAT THEY WANTED DONE WITH FRUIT WHICH HAS TESTED POSITIVE: (A) HAVE IT RESHIPED; (B) HAVE DESTROYED; (C) HAVE IT WASHED AND ALLOWED TO ENTER; OR (D) OTHER. RESULTS OF THIS SURVEY WILL HELP MHW DECIDE WHAT TO HAVE DONE WITH IT. FYI: WASHING IS APPARENTLY IMPRACTICAL WITH FUNGICIDES APPLIED BEFORE WAX WHICH IS INSOLUBLE IN WATER. EACH FRUIT MUST BE SCRUBBED TO REMOVE WAX AND UNDERLING FUNGICIDE. THIS CONFIRMED BY DR. SMOOT.

5. MIURA SAID SUSPENSION OF REGULATIONS TO ALLOW FRUIT CONTAINING TBZ OR OPP INTO MARKET MAY BE POSSIBLE UNDER THE LAW, BUT WOULD NOT BE POLITICALLY FEASIBLE ESPECIALLY IN CURRENT CLIMATE. HENCE ALTHOUGH VAN HORN OF SUNKIST VISITED MHW MINISTER TANAKA AND DIR GEN ISHIMARU LAST WEEK, HE WAS TOLD QUOTE NO UNQUOTE.

6. MIURA ASKED US TO VISIT HIM AGAIN TOMORROW (MAY 7) FOR FURTHER CONSULTATION.

7. MIYAZAWA WAS NATURALLY MUCH MORE STAND-OFFISH. WOULD NOT GIVE US ANY INDICATION OF HOW LONG IT WOULD TAKE TO GIVE DEFINITIVE ANSWER TO OUR AIDE MEMOIRE ALTHOUGH HE SUGGESTED IT WOULD TAKE LONGER THAN SIX MONTHS. HE SAID HE WAS READY TO ACCEPT PETITIONS ON TBZ AND OPP BUT WAS MOST INTERESTED IN RECEIVING DATA SHOWING THAT DIPHENYL ALONE IS NOT SUFFICIENT. SEEMED TO HAVE NO PROBLEM WITH SAFETY OF EITHER OPP OR TBZ, BUT WANTS DATA THAT CAN BE USED TO SHOW THEY ARE NECESSARY FOR JAPAN.

8. ACTION REQUESTED. PLEASE CONTACT HATTON WITH FOLLOWING FROM SMOOT: NEED DATA (REFERENCES, REPRINTS, ETC.) FOR MHW TO SHOW NECESSITY FOR USE OF MORE THAN ONE KIND CITRUS POST HARVEST LIMITED OFFICIAL USE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 03 TOKYO 05989 061033Z

FUNGICIDE, E.G. BIPHENYL, OPP, TBZ OR BENOMYL, BECAUSE OF RESISTANT STRAINS AND SINCE NO ONE CHEMICAL CONTROLS ALL DECAYS COMMON TO CITRUS. ALSO FLORIDA PROBLEMS DIFFERENT FROM CALIFORNIA. THESE NOT AVAILABLE IN TOKYO BUT WILL TRY EXPERIMENT STATIONS. SUGGEST INPUT FROM ELDON BROWN, L. HOUCK AND J. ECKERT.

9. VIRTUALLY NO LEMONS ON MARKET TODAY. THOSE AVAILABLE SELLING AT 12,000 TO 13,000 YEN (\$42 TO \$45) PER CARTON WHOLESALE.

10. UP DATE TO REF B.: ACCORDING TO MHW AS OF MAY 1, OF SAMPLES

FROM 195,791 CARTONS LEMONS TESTED, 73,638 TESTED POSITIVE
(WERE REJECTED); GRAPEFRUIT, FROM SAMPLES TESTED ON 1,666,659
CARTONS, 11,163 CARTONS REJECTED; ORANGES, 25,269 CARTONS
SAMPLED AND TESTED, 9,483 CARTONS REJECTED. FYI. ACCORDING
TO TRADE, ABOUT ONE MILLION CARTONS GRAPEFRUIT AWAIT
UNLOADING IN JAPANESE PORTS.

11. AT THIS POINT IT APPEARS THAT SOLUTION WILL ONLY COME AFTER
ALL FRUIT NOT MEETING MHW REQUIREMENTS HAS BEEN DISPOSED OF IN
ONE WAY OR ANOTHER AND DOMESTIC POLITICAL CLIMATE PERMITS
REGULATION CHANGE. IN MEANTIME, IF U.S. SHIPPER WILL NOT USE
FUNGICIDES OTHER THAN DIPHENYL, SPOILAGE RATE SHOULD DO A LOT
TO CONVICNCE MHW OF NEED OF OPP AND TBZ. SITUATION MAY CHANGE,
BUT THIS IS OUR CURRENT ASSESSMENT.
HODGSON

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